REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed December 11, 2002, the Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration.

IN THE DRAWINGS

Applicant proposes amendments to Figs. 1, 7, 15, 17 and 18, as illustrated on the Marked-Up copies of these figures enclosed herewith. Further, Applicant submits formal drawings herewith that include these proposed amendments, which do not include any new matter. The Examiner is respectfully requested to approve these amendments and to accept the formal drawings.

IN THE ABSTRACT

In response to the objections to the Abstract (Office Action, ¶2), Applicant has amended the Abstract to include between 50-150 words in accordance with MPEP §608.01(b), as illustrated in the attachment hereto titled "Marked-up Abstract." Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the objection to the Abstract be withdrawn.

IN THE WRITTEN DESCRIPTION

In response to objections to the written description (Office Action, ¶¶3,4), Applicant proposes amendments to page 1 of the written description to update the serial numbers of the co-related applications, as illustrated in the attachment hereto titled "Marked-Up Written Description". Further, Applicant proposes amendments that remove the embedded hyperlinks found on page 1 of the written description, as illustrated in the Marked-Up Written Description attachment.

To further the prosecution of this application, other amendments have been made to the written description as illustrated in the Marked-Up Written Description attachment. Some of these amendments correct either typographical or grammatical errors. Others of these amendments add language which is clearly supported by the figures, and yet others merely correct incorrect citations to numbers found in the figures.

No new matter has been added by any of the above amendments. The Examiner is respectfully requested to approve these amendments.

IN THE CLAIMS

To further the prosecution of this application, amendments have been made in the claims, as illustrated in the document submitted herewith entitled "Marked-up Claims."

Claims 1-20 were previously pending in this application. Claim 3 has been amended and claims 21-28 have been added. As a result, claims 1-28 are pending for examination, of which claims 1, 10, 19 and 20 are independent.

1. Use of the Word "Act" in Claims 1, 2, 4-9 and 20 is Not Awkward

Claims 1, 2, 4-9 and 20 stand objected-to (Office Action, ¶5) because the use of the word "act" in each of these claims is allegedly awkward. Applicant respectfully disagrees for the following reasons.

35 U.S.C. §112, ¶6, specifies that:

> "An element in a claim for a combination may be expressed as a means or step for performing a specified function without the recital of structure, material, or **acts** in support thereof, and such claims shall be construed to cover the corresponding structure, material, or **acts** described in the specification and equivalents thereof." [emphasis added]

Accordingly, Applicant has drafted claims 1, 2, 4-9 and 20 to include the word "act" as opposed to the word "step" to make clear that none of claims 1, 2, 4-9 and 20 are "step for" claims as defined under §112, ¶6.

Further, Applicants understand that it is customary to use the word "step" as opposed to the word "act" in method claims, and that this may be the reason the Examiner finds the word "awkward". Applicants respectfully submit, however, that the use of the word "act" in a method claim is not awkward per se, but merely less familiar to the Examiner than the use of the word "step".

For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the objections to claims 1, 2, 4-9 and 20 under paragraph four of the Office Action be withdrawn.

2. Claims 1-9 Patentably Distinguish Over Zacharia

Claims 1-6 stand rejected (Office Action, ¶7) under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as purportedly being anticipated by "Collaborative Reputation Mechanisms in Electronic Marketplaces" by Giorgos C. Zacharia ("Zacharia"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

2.1 Discussion of Zacharia

Zacharia discloses reputation mechanisms for determining reputations of users in electronic marketplaces. One of these reputation mechanisms, Histos, is used for highly-connected on-line communities (see Figure 2). Histos uses a breadth-first algorithm to find all directed rating paths from a first user to a second user *that are of length less than or equal to N.* Histos then determines the personalized reputation value of the second user from the perspective of the first user, including using the personalized reputation ratings of the users located at the last node of the path before the second user. (Page 4, second column, line 16 - page 5, first column, end; Fig. 2).

Histos discloses (Equation 3) that the determined reputation value, R_{i+1}, is determined by combining ratings, W_{i+1}, provided by users and weighting these combined ratings by two factors: $\Phi_{(Ri+1)}$ and $1/\theta'$, where $\theta' = min(\theta, m, ,)$ θ=is a constant integer greater than 1 (see description of θ on page 4, both columns), *m=deg(second user)*, *deg(second user)* is the number of connected paths from the first user to the second user with length less than or equal to the current value of L (the length of the path). (Page 4, second column, line 16 - page 5, second column, end; Fig. 2, Equation 3).

Although the variable θ is not entirely consistently used in Zacharia's description of Histos, as there are a few references to it as a "length", θ most clearly represents a number of most recent paths to consider when determining the personalized reputation value. In addition to the frequent references to θ as representing a number of paths to consider, it is clear that in Equation 3 it represents a number of paths. This is evident from the *min* function performed in Equation 3, which compares θ with variable m, which, as described above, is the number of connected paths from the first user to the second user less than or equal to a length L. For this *min* function to make any sense, θ must represent a number of paths, not a length of a path.

Thus, $1/\theta'$ weights combined ratings based on a number of rating paths between the first user and the second user, *not* a length of any of the rating paths between the first and second users.

Further, $\Phi_{(Rl+1)}$ is a damping function (see Equation 1 on Page 4) that does not include any variable relating to a length of a rating path between two entities. Thus, $\Phi_{(Rl+1}$ does not weight the combined ratings based on a length of any of the rating paths between the first and second users.

2.2 Claim 1

Claim 1 is directed to a method, for a population of entities, of determining a personalized ratee reputation of a first entity from the perspective of a second entity associated with the first entity by one or more rating paths. A rating path comprises one or more rating links, each rating link defining a rating of a rated entity provided by a rating entity. Each rating path has a length defined as a number of rating links comprised in the path, and each entity comprised on one of the rating paths has a level defined as a number of rating links between the entity and the second entity. The method comprises an act (A) of performing a breadth-first search beginning at the second entity **to determine, from the one or more rating paths, one or more first rating paths that have a first length equal to a shortest length between the first entity and the second entity**. The method further comprises acts of:(B) for each determined first rating path, identifying a third entity on the first rating path that has a level equal to one less than the first length; and (C) for each identified third entity, determining a first rating of the first entity provided by the third entity; (D) combining the first ratings; and (E) producing the personalized ratee reputation **by weighting the combined first ratings by an amount according to the first length**.

As disclosed by Applicant, "[i]t may be desirable to consider a shortest distance between the first and second entities when determining the reputation of the first entity from the perspective of the second entity. Considering this distance addresses the principle that the second entity may have more trust for a first entity with which the second entity is in relatively closer contact than in a first entity with which the second entity is in relatively distant contact." (Page 8, lines 3-7).

2.3 Claim 1 is Not Anticipated by Zacharia

Claim 1 is not anticipated by Zacharia because Zacharia fails to disclose a method of determining a personalized ratee reputation of a first entity from the perspective of a second entity associated with the first entity by one or more rating paths, the method comprising, *inter alia*, determining, from the one or more rating paths, one or more first rating paths that have a

first length equal to a shortest length between the first entity and the second entity, and producing the personalized ratee reputation by weighting the combined first ratings by an amount according to the first length.

Contrary to the assertions of the Office Action, Zacharia does not disclose determining a shortest length between the first entity and the second entity, but, in contrast, discloses using a breadth-first algorithm to find every rating path less than or equal to a predefined length, i.e., N-1 (see above).

Further, Zacharia does not disclose weighting combined ratings to determine a personalized reputation according to such determined shortest length, but, in contrast, discloses weighting such combined ratings *based on a number of ratings paths*.

Thus, in contrast to claim 1, the Histos reputation mechanism disclosed in Zacharia does not realize the principle that a second entity may have more trust for a first entity with which the second entity is in relatively closer contact than in a first entity with which the second entity is in relatively distant contact.

Therefore, for at least these reasons, claim 1 is not anticipated by Zacharia. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 1 under §102(b) be withdrawn.

Claim 2-9, which each depend from claim 1, are patentable over Zacharia for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of claims 2-6 under §102(b) be withdrawn.

3. Claims 10-18 are Patentable Over Zacharia

Claim 10 is not anticipated by Zacharia because Zacharia fails to disclose a system for determining, in a population of entities, a personalized ratee reputation of a first entity from the perspective of a second entity associated with the first entity by one or more rating paths, the system comprising, *inter alia*, a path-searching module to determine, from the one or more rating paths, one or more first rating paths that have a first length equal to a shortest length between the first entity and the second entity, and a ratings combining module to generate the personalized ratee reputation by combining the first ratings and weighting the combined first ratings by an amount according to the first length, as recited in claim 10.

Therefore, for at least these reasons, claim 10 is not anticipated by Zacharia. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 10 under §102(b) be withdrawn.

Claim 11-18, which each depend from claim 1, are patentable over Zacharia for at least the same reasons as claim 10. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of claims 11-18 under §102(b) be withdrawn.

4. Claim 19 Patentably Distinguishes Over Zacharia

Claim 19 is not anticipated by Zacharia because Zacharia fails to disclose a system for determining a personalized ratee reputation of a first entity from the perspective of a second entity associated with the first entity by one or more rating paths, the system comprising, *inter alia*, means for performing a breadth-first search beginning at the second entity to determine, from the one or more rating paths, one or more first rating paths that have a first length equal to a shortest length between the first entity and the second entity; and means for producing the personalized ratee reputation by weighting the combined first ratings by an amount according to the first length, as recited in claim 19

Therefore, for at least these reasons, claim 19 is not anticipated by Zacharia. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 19 under §102(b) be withdrawn.

5. Claims 20-28 Patentably Distinguish Over Zacharia

Claim 20 is not anticipated by Zacharia because Zacharia fails to disclose a computer program product comprising: a computer readable medium; and computer readable signals stored on the computer readable medium that define instructions that, as a result of being executed by a computer, instruct the computer to perform, for a population of entities, a method of determining a personalized ratee reputation of a first entity from the perspective of a second entity associated with the first entity by one or more rating paths, the method comprising, *inter alia*, acts of: performing a breadth-first search beginning at the second entity to determine, from the one or more rating paths, one or more first rating paths that have a first length equal to a shortest length between the first entity and the second entity; and producing the personalized ratee reputation by

weighting the combined first ratings by an amount according to the first length, as recited in claim 20.

Therefore, for at least these reasons, claim 20 is not anticipated by Zacharia. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 20 under §102(b) be withdrawn.

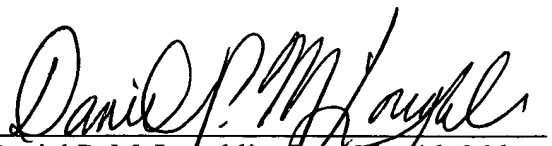
Claim 21-28, which each depend from claim 20, are patentable over Zacharia for at least the same reasons as claim 20. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that these claims are in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application should now be in condition for allowance. A notice to this effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, after this amendment, that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the Applicant's attorney at the telephone number listed below.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicant hereby requests any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 23/2825.

Respectfully submitted
Giorgos C. Zacharia, Applicant

By: 

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Docket No.: O00220.70002.US
Date: April 11, 2003
x03/11/03x

MARKED-UP WRITTEN DESCRIPTION

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 1, line 9 to read as follows:

Further, each of the following related commonly-owned U.S. patent applications: U.S. Application Serial No. 09/710,008 (Attorney Docket No. O00220.70001.US), titled "Method and System for Ascribing a Reputation to an Entity as a Rater of Other Entities" by Giorgos Zacharia and Dmitry Tkach, U.S. Application Serial No. 09/710,498 (Attorney Docket No. O00220.70003.US), titled "System and Method for Estimating the Impacts of Multiple Ratings on a Result" by Giorgos Zacharia, U.S. Application Serial No. 09/710,011 (Attorney Docket No. O00220.70006.US), titled "System and Method for Ascribing a Reputation to an Entity" by Giorgos Zacharia, and U.S. Application Serial No. 09/710,289 (Attorney Docket No. O00220.70007.US), titled "System and Method for Recursively Estimating a Reputation of an Entity" by Giorgos Zacharia, each application filed on [even date herewith] November 10, 2000, is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety.

a2

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 1, line 18 to read as follows:

The emergence of the Internet and other large networks has increased both the number and kinds of electronic exchanges between entities. As used herein, an electronic exchange is any exchange between two or more entities over an electronic network (i.e., not in person) such as, for example, a voice communications network (e.g., POTS or PBX) or a data communications network (e.g., LAN or the Internet) or a voice-and-data communications network (e.g., voice-over-IP network). Electronic exchanges may include electronic business transactions and electronic communications. Such electronic business transactions may include the negotiation and closing of a sale of goods or services, including solicitation of customers, making an offer and accepting an offer. For example, in consumer-to-consumer electronic marketplaces (e.g., the eBay, OnSale, Yahoo and Amazon marketplaces found on the global Internet, [at the following respective URLs: www.ebay.com, www.onsale.com, www.yahoo.com, and www.amazon.com)] entities may transact for the sale and purchase of goods or services.

a3

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 5, line 26 to read as follows:

To determine a personalized reputation of a first entity from the perspective of a second entity, the first and second entity must be "connected". A first and second entity are connected if

a4

a rating path connects the first and second entity. A rating path is a series of rating links that connect a first entity to a second entity. For example, in Fig. 1, entities A_I and A_{II} are connected by several rating paths, including rating paths 312 and 314. Rating path 312 includes rating links 302, 304 and 310 [312], and rating path 314 includes rating links 302, 306 and 308.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 12, line 5 to read as follows:

In an aspect of determining a rater reputation of an entity, the result of the comparison of (a) the rating provided by the first [rating] rater of a rated entity and (b) other ratings of the rated entity provided by other raters may be weighed over a ratee reputation deviation of the rated entity, as will be described in more detail below in relation to Fig. 5. This ratee reputation deviation represents a deviation of ratings of the rated entity from an expected value of the rating of the rated entity. Entities whose ratee reputations fluctuate over a wide range of values, such as new entities and entities that receive a wide range of ratings (i.e., unstable entities), typically have high ratee reputation deviations. This weighting of the comparison results in a rating predictability that is greater for greater values of ratee reputation deviation and less for lesser values of ratee reputation deviation.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 17, line 10 to read as follows:

Alternatively, if the first entity has provided other [rating] ratings of other entities, and rating predictabilities have been generated from these other ratings (e.g., by performing Acts 2 and 4 on the provided ratings), then, in Act 5, the other rating predictabilities may be combined with the rating predictability generated in Act 4 to produce the rater reputation of the first entity. Act 5 may be implemented in any of several different ways. In one implementation, Act 5 may be implemented by averaging all of the generated rating predictabilities associated with each rating provided by the first entity. Accordingly, a rater reputation may be determined by applying the following equation:

Equation 11: $$R^{rater} = \frac{1}{n} \bullet \sum_{j=1}^{n} P_j(X),$$

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 21, line 17 to read as follows:

a7

For example, if rater reputations are being determined for the rating entities that provided the most recent 20 ratings, then, M=[1] 20. For the rating entity that provided the earliest rating, $m = 20$ and $m/M = 1$. Further, for the rating entity that provided the most recent rating, m = 1 and $m/M = 1/20$.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 23, line 3 to read as follows:

a8

Further, to seed a reputation system by recursively determining a rater reputation of a first entity, the expected rating for each first rating provided by the first entity may be determined by applying the following equation:

$$\text{Equation 18:} \quad E_i^{ratee} = \frac{1}{D} \bullet \sum_{i-1-C/2}^{i-1+C/2} R_{i-1}^{ratee},$$

where R_{i-1} is the ratee reputation of the rated entity at i-1, D is the range of allowed reputation values, $1/C$ is the change rate factor and E_i^{ratee} [ratee] is the determined expect rating.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 23, line 10 to read as follows:

a9

Fig. 4 is a data flow diagram illustrating an example embodiment of a system 19 for generating a rater reputation 38. The rater reputation generator 20 may receive a request 21 from a user indicating a request for a first entity's reputation. In response to the user request 21, the rater reputation generator 20 may receive as input a first rater rating 26 and selected second ratings 28, and generate the resulting rater reputation 38 as output, for example, by performing Acts 2-5 of Fig. 2 [3]. In one implementation, the rater reputation generator 20 may also receive as input other rating predictabilities 49 to generate a resulting rater reputation 38 by averaging rating predictabilities, as described above in relation to Fig. 2.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 27, line 27 to read as follows:

a10

Equation 19 may be considered a recursive estimation algorithm of Recursive Least Squares (RLS) with a forgetting factor of F. Equation 19 estimates recursively an average square deviation of an actual rating from an expected (i.e., estimated) rating described in more detail below in relation to Figs. 8 and 9. For more information regarding Recursive Least [Leased] Squares, please refer to Chapter 9 of "Lecture Notes and Non-Linear and Non-

Q10 cont'd

Stationary Time Series Analysis," by H. Madsen and J. Holst, Institute of Mathematical Modeling (IMM), Technical University of Denmark, Lyngby, Denmark, 1998 (hereinafter the Madsen text), the contents of which is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 30, line 4 to read as follows:

Q11

Fig. 7 is a data flow diagram illustrating an example embodiment of a system 79 for generating a rater reputation deviation. A rater reputation deviation generator 82 may receive as input an initial rater reputation 22, a rating predictability 46, an initial rater reputation deviation 80 and a forgetting factor 77 [34]. Rater reputation deviation generator 82 also may receive other rater reputations 24.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 30, line 27 to read as follows:

Q12

The forgetting factor 77 [34] may be stored as a constant in a reputation database or similar data structure as described below in relation to Fig. 18. The initial rater reputation 22, the rating predictability 46, the other rater reputations 24 and the initial rater reputation deviation 80 also may be stored in the reputation database or similar data structure. In response to receiving the rating predictability 46, the rater reputation deviation generator 82 may access the reputation database or similar data structure to access and retrieve values 22, 24, 80 and 77 [34], and generate rater reputation deviation 84. The rater reputation deviation 84 then may be stored in the reputation database or similar structure for later access.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 36, line 9 to read as follows:

Q13

In a next Act 406, for each identified third party, a first rating of the first entity [identity] provided by the third entity is determined. For each identified third entity, it may be determined that the third entity has provided more than one rating of the first entity. For each third entity for which it has been determined that more than one rating has been provided, a most recent rating may be selected from the one or more ratings to serve as the first rating of the first entity provided by the third entity.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 37, line 2 to read as follows:

where $R_k(n)$ is the personalized ratee reputation of an entity *k* from a perspective of a second entity a distance *n* from the entity *k*, $W_{jk}(n)$ is a rating provided by an entity *j* for the entity *k*, where the entity j is a distance *n-1* from the second entity, $R_j(n-1)$ is the personalized ratee reputation of the entity *j* from the perspective of the second entity, *D* is a range of allowable personalized ratee reputation valves, and f(n) is a function of the [distances] distance *n* between the second entity and the entity K (i.e., a function of the length of the rating paths between the second entity and entity K), such as, for example:

Equation 28: $f(n) = \frac{1}{T^n}$

where T is a constant number having a value >1.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 37, line 14 to read as follows:

Weighting the personalized ratee reputation as a function of the distance between the first and second entity, where the shorter the distance the greater the value of the weighting and represents the principle that the less attenuated the rating path between a first and second entity, the more likely the second entity is to trust the determined personalized ratee reputation.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 43, line 31 to read as follows:

In a next Act 154, the resulting adjustment matrix may be inverted to produce an inverted adjustment matrix. In a following Act 156, a weighting modification may be generated from the transposed multi-rating vector, an initial weighting vector and a result (e.g., an overall rating or other qualitative assessment). The weighting modification may be generated by applying the following equation:

Equation 30: $Z_{mod} = Y_t - X_t^T Z_{t-1}$, [Equation 30: $Z_{mod} Y_t - X_t^T Z_{t-1}$,]

where Y_{t-1} is the initial weighting vector, Y_t is the result, and Z_{mod} is the weighting modification. The weighting modification represents a difference between the result Y_t and an estimated result, $X_t^T Z_{t-1}$, according to the initial weighting vector and the multi-rating vector.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 50, line 16 to read as follows:

Optionally, the first and second estimated ratee reputations [reputation] may be weighted by estimated ratee reputation deviations to calculate a weighted average. For example, to determine the third estimated ratee reputation, the following equation may be applied:

Equation 36: $$R_3 = \frac{RD_1^{rater} \bullet R_2 + RD_2^{[weight]rater} \bullet R_1}{RD_1^{rater} + RD_2^{[weight]rater}};$$

where R_1 is the first estimated ratee reputation, R_2 is second estimated ratee reputation and R_3 is the third estimated ratee reputation. RD_1^{rater} is a first estimated ratee reputation deviation corresponding to the first estimated ratee reputation and may be determined by application of Equation 21 [34 or 35] as described above. $RD_2^{[weight]rater}$ is a second estimated ratee reputation deviation corresponding to the second estimated ratee reputation and may be determined by application of Equation 34 or 35 [21] as described above.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 50, line 27 to read as follows:

As described above in [is] relation to Equations [Figs] 21, 34 and 35, for a given estimated ratee reputation, a higher estimated ratee reputation deviation represents a lower reliability of the estimated ratee reputation and, conversely, a lower estimated ratee reputation deviation represents a higher reliability of the estimated ratee reputation. Therefore, if both the first and second estimated ratee reputations were weighted according to their respective ratee reputation deviations, the ratee reputation with a higher deviation and lower reliability would be given more weight (i.e., have a greater impact) in generating the third estimated ratee reputation, which consequently would generate a less reliable third estimated ratee reputation than that defined by Equation 36.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 51, line 13 to read as follows:

Fig. 17 is a data flow diagram illustrating an example embodiment of a system 700 for generating an estimated ratee reputation[generator]. The system 700 may include a reputation database 726 and an estimated ratee reputation generator 706 that includes a first ratee reputation

A19 cont'd

estimator 708 and a second ratee reputation estimator 712. The reputation database 726 may be a reputation database or similar data structure as described below in relation to Fig. 18.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 51, line 19 to read as follows:

A20

The estimated ratee reputation generator 706 may receive ratee attribute reputations 702 and a ratee ID 704. The ratee attribute reputations 702 may be determined, as described above, from attributes corresponding to transactions with a first entity, and the ratee ID 704 may indicate the first entity. The estimated ratee reputation generator 706 may use the ratee ID 704 to access, from reputation database 726, weighting values 718, first estimated ratee reputation deviation 720, second estimated ratee reputation [deviation] 722 and second estimated ratee reputation deviation 724. The estimated ratee reputation generator 706 may use values 718, 720, 722 and 724 to generate a third estimated ratee reputation 714, for example, as described above in relation to Fig. 16.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 51, line 29 to read as follows:

A21

The first ratee reputation estimator 708 may receive the one or more ratee attribute reputations 702 and the weighting values 718, and generate the second estimated ratee reputation 710, for example, as described above in relation to Act 606 of the Fig. 16.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 52, line 1 to read as follows:

A22

The second ratee reputation estimator 712 may receive the first estimated ratee reputation deviation 720, the first [second] estimated ratee reputation 722, [and] the second estimated ratee reputation deviation 724 and the second estimated ratee reputation 710, and generate the third estimated ratee reputation 714, for example, as described above in relation to Act 610 of Fig. 16.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 52, line 23 to read as follows:

A23

Figure 18 is a data flow diagram illustrating an example system architecture 209 for implementing the methods, systems and variations thereof described above in relation to Figs. 2-17. The system 209 may include a client 210, a server 212, ratee [a rater] reputation database 234, an authentication I.D. database 236 and a rater reputation database 238. The components 210, 212, 234, 236 and 238 of the system 209 may have a variety of configurations. For

example, all these components may reside on a single computer, or any combination thereof may reside on a separate computer or multiple computers interconnected, for example, by a network. Further, any combination of these components may reside on separate networks, including separate LANs (Local Area Networks), MANs (Metropolitan Area Networks) and WANs (Wide Area Networks).

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 55, line 23 to read as follows:

Further, the server 212, through the frontend 230, may receive a user query 216 from the client 210. For example, the user query may be requesting the rater reputations of one or more entities, the ratee reputations of one or more entities, or the personalized ratee reputation of one or more entities from the perspective of a particular entity. The server 212 [230] may convert the user query 216 into a database query, for example, a ratee query 240 or a rater query 248, and send the database query to the appropriate database. The server 212 [230] then may send the query results 218 to the client 210.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 55, line 30 to read as follows:

The server 212 [230] may be part of an on-line marketplace, for example, an agent-mediated marketplace. Accordingly, the client may request and receive marketplace information 220 from the server 230. Further, the server 212 [230], as part of a transaction between an entity corresponding to the client 210 and a counterpart entity, may send communications 222 to the client 210. The communications 222 may include notifications pertaining to the current transaction, prompts for information from the entity corresponding to the client 210, reputations of the counterpart entity, and other information about the entity including demographic data, weighting values, etc.

Please rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 56, line 9 to read as follows:

The client 210 may include a user interface to allow interaction between a user and an application, for example, a reputation application or marketplace application implemented using the client 210 and server 212 [230]. The user interface may involve using CGI scripts to generate web pages in accordance with any of a variety of markup languages such as, for example, HTML, XML or SGML.

MARKED-UP CLAIMS

3. (Amended) The method of claim 2, wherein calculating the average comprises, for each first rating, weighting the first rating as a function of a personalized ratee reputation of the corresponding third entity from the perspective of the second entity, the weighting being relative to personalized ratee reputations of the other third entities from the perspective of the second entity.

MARKED-UP ABSTRACT

[A method and system for determining a personalized ratee reputation of a first entity from a perspective of a second entity, where the determined ratee reputation is weighted according to a distance of a shortest reputation path between the first and second entities. For a population of entities, a] A personalized ratee reputation of a first entity from the perspective of a second entity is determined. The second entity is connected by one or more rating paths to the first entity[, where a rating path comprises one or more rating links]. [Each rating link defines a rating of a rated entity provided by a rating entity, and each rating path has a length defined as a number of rating links comprised in the path. Each entity comprised on one of the rating paths has a level defined as a number of rating links between the entity and the second entity.] A breadth-first search is performed, beginning at the second entity, to determine, from the one or more rating paths, one or more first rating paths that have a first length equal to a shortest length between the first entity and the second entity. For each determined first rating path, a third entity on the first rating path that has a level equal to one less than the first length is identified. For each identified third entity, a first rating of the first entity provided by the third entity determined, and the first ratings are combined. The personalized ratee reputation is then produced by weighting the combined first ratings by an amount according to the first length.